

UNITED STATES PATENT APPLICATION

FOR

**GAMING DEVICE HAVING AN AWARD EXCHANGE BONUS ROUND
AND METHOD FOR REVEALING AWARD EXCHANGE POSSIBILITIES**

INVENTORS:

**BAYARD S. WEBB,
ANTHONY J. BAERLOCHER,
JEAN M. BROSSARD,
JOSEPH E. KAMINKOW
AND
STEVEN P. MCGAHN**

Prepared by:
Bell, Boyd & Lloyd LLC
70 West Madison Street
Suite 3300
Chicago, Illinois 60602
(312) 372-1121
Our File No.: 0112300-140

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DESCRIPTION

The present invention relates in general to a gaming device, and more particularly to a gaming device having a bonus round comprising an apparatus and method for providing an award to a player, enabling the player to exchange the award for one of a higher or lower value and revealing the outcome of the player's choice in an exciting and entertaining manner.

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Gaming devices currently exist with bonus rounds in which a player has one or more opportunities to choose masked bonus awards from a pattern or group of masked awards displayed to the player. When the

player chooses a masked award from the pattern or group, the game removes the mask and either awards the player with a bonus value or terminates the bonus round with a bonus terminator. The outcome depends upon whether the player selects an award or a terminator.

5 In the above game, the controller of the gaming device randomly places a predetermined number of masked awards and terminators in the pattern at the beginning of the bonus round and maintains the positioning until the bonus round terminates. When the player selects a masked award, the player receives the value of the award, and the game typically
10 displays a message that the player may continue and enables the player to select another masked award. The player then selects another masked award, and the process continues until the player selects a masked terminator. European Patent Application No. EP 0 945 837 A2 filed on March 18, 1999 and assigned on its face to WMS Gaming, Inc. discloses
15 a bonus scheme of this type.

Gaming machines also currently exist with bonus rounds in which the game selects or determines the player's award. PCT patent application PCT/AU97/00121 entitled, Slot Machine Game with Roaming Wild Card, having a publication date of September 4, 1997, discloses an
20 example. In this invention, a slot machine having a video display contains a plurality of rotatable reels with game symbols. When the player receives a triggering symbol or combination, the game produces a bonus symbol.

The bonus symbol moves from game symbol to game symbol temporarily changing the game symbol to a bonus symbol. If the change results in a winning combination, the player receives an award.

In the first known game, the "go-until" or "do-until" bonus round can
5 end quite quickly if the player selects a terminator early in the bonus
round. The player blindly selects masked awards until selecting the bonus
terminator, which is immediately displayed. The player knows nothing
about the location of any particular award, and there is no logical incentive
to select any particular masked award as opposed to any another masked
10 award. Choosing a masked award also poses no risk to a previously
accumulated award. That is, there is no incentive to stop selecting. The
only logical course is for the player to continue selecting until selecting a
terminator. The player's involvement in the bonus round and thus the
player's level of enjoyment and excitement from the bonus round is thus
15 limited.

The second known game has even less player interaction. The
game completely determines the bonus round award, and the player has
no affect on the outcome. The player is a mere observer to the bonus
round sequence and participates only by receiving an award. In both
20 games, the player is not prompted to calculate, weigh options, or explore
any consequences of any action. To increase player excitement and
enjoyment, it is desirable to provide a gaming device, and more

specifically a bonus round of a gaming device, which prompts a player to calculate, weigh options and explore the consequences of the player's selection.

5 ~~in the known "go-until" or "do-until" bonus round, the game reveals all unselected awards and terminators associated with the pattern after the player selects a terminator. The application makes no specific reference as to how or in which manner the game reveals the unselected awards or terminators. Revealing the masks from selected and unselected awards and other gaming device components is well known in the art. No known~~
10 ~~game, however, reveals awards or other gaming device components in any particular manner or employs any particular method of deciding which awards, etc. to reveal first, second, etc. It should be appreciated, that in a game which prompts a player to calculate, weigh options, and explore the consequences of the player's selection, it is desirable to reveal the~~
15 ~~consequences of the player's selection in a manner that maximizes player excitement and enjoyment.~~

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a gaming device, and more
20 particularly a bonus round of a gaming device, having an award generation apparatus and method, whereby the game awards an initial award to a player, discloses to a player that a higher valued enticement

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If the player picks the high valued or enticement award, the game preferably randomly selects whether to display the low valued or intermediate consolation award first and displays the high valued award third. The game reveals the awards in a predetermined sequence, which
5 attempts to maximize the player's excitement and enjoyment. If the player keeps the initial award, deciding not to exchange, the game can instantly reveal all the masked awards or reveal the masked awards according to the same predetermined sequence disclosed with respect to a player's choice of the enticement award.

10 It should be appreciated that the game preferably applies two rules in revealing the awards in the manner previously disclosed. First, the game preferably never reveals the player selected award first. The game either reveals a player selected low valued or intermediate award second or reveals a player selected high valued award third. Second, the game
15 preferably always reveals the high valued enticement award third.

The game preferably reveals the awards using the touch screen display device mentioned above. The game can remove a mask to uncover the award hidden beneath. Alternatively, the game can provide a separate display area, which displays the selected or, alternatively, a
20 plurality or all the awards. In one embodiment, the game contemplates providing an electro-mechanical door and secondary display device, separate from the main display device, which opens up to reveal an

award. The door can either be dedicated to a particular selector, or can open up to reveal an entire sequence of awards as described above.

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a bonus round of gaming device, wherein the game prompts a player to calculate, weigh options, and explore the consequences of the player's selection.

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Another object of the present invention is that in a gaming device that prompts a player to calculate, weigh options, and explore the consequences of the player's selection, to reveal the consequences of the player's selection in a manner that attempts to maximize player excitement and enjoyment.

Other objects, features and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following detailed disclosure, taken in conjunction with the accompanying sheets of drawings, wherein like numerals refer to like parts, elements, components, steps and processes.

15

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a front elevational view of a general embodiment of the gaming device of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a schematic block diagram of the electronic configuration of one embodiment of the gaming device of the present invention;

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Fig. 3 is a front elevational view of the display device illustrating one embodiment of the present invention, wherein the game discloses that an initial award and an enticement award exist;

Fig. 4 is a front elevational view of the display device illustrating
5 another embodiment of the present invention, wherein the game discloses the value of the initial award and that an enticement award exists;

Fig. 5 is a front elevational view of the display device illustrating a further embodiment of the present invention, wherein the game discloses that an initial award exists and the value of the enticement award;

10 Fig. 6 is a front elevational view of the display device illustrating a preferred embodiment of the present invention, wherein the game discloses the value of an initial award and the value of the enticement award;

Fig. 7 is a front elevational view of the display device illustrating a
15 yet another embodiment of the present invention, wherein the game discloses the value of an initial award, the value of the enticement award and the values of consolation awards;

Fig. 8 is a front elevational view of the display device illustrating
another example of the embodiment of Fig. 7, wherein the game contains
20 and discloses the values of the initial award, multiple enticement awards and multiple consolation awards;

Fig. 9 is a process flow diagram illustrating the award exchange method of the present invention, wherein the game can include multiple award exchange opportunities and one or more value disclosures;

Fig. 10 is a chart illustrating the reveal sequence of the present invention, wherein the player selects either an initial award, a low valued masked award, an intermediate masked award, or a high valued masked award;

Fig. 11 is a chart illustrating the reveal sequence of the present invention, wherein the player can select from an initial award, a low valued masked award, a plurality of intermediate masked awards, and a plurality of high valued masked awards;

Fig. 12 is a front elevational view illustrating an example of a separate electro-mechanical display mechanism in a masking position, said display mechanism operating in conjunction with the display device to reveal an award of the present invention;

Fig. 13 is a front elevational view illustrating an example of a separate electro-mechanical display mechanism in an open position, revealing a secondary display operating in conjunction with the display device to reveal selected awards of the present invention;

Fig. 14 is a top-front perspective view of a preferred secondary display device embodiment of the present invention employing two rollers and an award displaying belt in tension with such rollers; and

Fig. 15 is a front elevational view illustrating an alternative embodiment, wherein the separate display mechanism reveals all of the awards of the present invention.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Gaming Device and Electronics

Referring now to the drawings, Fig. 1 generally illustrates a gaming device 10 of one embodiment of the present invention, which is preferably a slot machine having the controls, displays and features of a conventional slot machine. Gaming device 10 is constructed so that a player can operate gaming device 10 while standing or sitting. However, it should be appreciated that gaming device 10 can be constructed as a pub-style table-top game (not shown) that a player can operate preferably while sitting. Gaming device 10 can also be implemented as a program code stored in a detachable cartridge for operating a hand-held video game device. Also, gaming device 10 can be implemented as a program code stored on a disk or other memory device which a player can use in a desktop or laptop personal computer or other computerized platform. Gaming device 10 can incorporate any game such as slot, poker or keno. The symbols used on and in gaming device 10 may be in mechanical, electrical or in video form.

As illustrated in Fig. 1, gaming device 10 includes a coin slot 12 and bill acceptor 14 where the player inserts money, coins or tokens. The player can place coins in the coin slot 12 or paper money in the bill acceptor 14. Other devices could be used for accepting payment such as readers or validators for credit cards or debit cards. When a player inserts money in gaming device 10, a number of credits corresponding to the amount deposited is shown in a credit display 16. The present invention preferably employs or uses credits, however, the present invention is not limited to the use of credits and contemplates employing other units of value such as money. For purposes of describing and claiming this invention, the term "credit" includes any unit of value such as a gaming device credit or actual money.

After depositing the appropriate amount of money, a player can begin the game by pulling arm 18 or by pushing play button 20. Play button 20 can be any play activator used by the player which starts any game or sequence of events in the gaming device.

Referring to Fig. 1, gaming device 10 also includes a bet display 22 and a bet one button 24. The player places a bet by pushing the bet one button 24. The player can increase the bet by one credit each time the player pushes the bet one button 24. When the player pushes the bet one button 24, the number of credits shown in the credit display 16 decreases

by one, and the number of credits shown in the bet display 22 increases by one.

Gaming device 10 also has a paystop display 28 which contains a plurality of reels 30, preferably three to five reels in mechanical or video form. Each reel 30 displays a plurality of symbols such as bells, hearts, martinis, fruits, cactuses, numbers, cigars, letters, bars or other images, which preferably correspond to a theme associated with the gaming device 10. If the reels 30 are in video form, the gaming device 10 preferably displays the video reels 30 in a display device described below. Furthermore, gaming device 10 preferably includes speakers 34 for making sounds or playing music.

At any time during the game, a player may "cash out" and thereby receive a number of coins corresponding to the number of remaining credits by pushing a cash out button 26. When the player "cashes out," the player receives the coins in a coin payout tray 36. The gaming device 10 may employ other payout mechanisms such as credit slips redeemable by a cashier or electronically recordable cards that keep track of the player's credits.

With respect to electronics, the controller of gaming device 10 preferably includes the electronic configuration generally illustrated in Fig. 2, which has: a processor 38; a memory device 40 for storing program code or other data; a display device 32 (i.e., a liquid crystal display)

Referring to Figs. 1 and 2, to operate the gaming device 10, the player must insert the appropriate amount of money or tokens at coin slot 12 or bill acceptor 14 and then pull the arm 18 or push the play button 20. The reels 30 will then begin to spin. Eventually, the reels 30 will come to a stop. As long as the player has credits remaining, the player can spin the reels 30 again. Depending upon where the reels 30 stop, the player may or may not win additional credits.

20 In addition to winning credits in this manner, gaming device 10 also preferably gives players the opportunity to win credits in a bonus round. This type of gaming device 10 will include a program that will automatically

begin a bonus round when the player has achieved a qualifying condition in the game. This qualifying condition can be a particular arrangement of indicia on the display window 28. The gaming device 10 also includes a display device such as a display device 32 shown in Fig. 1 enabling the player to play the bonus round. The display device 32 can be any known video monitor, television screen, dot matrix display, CRT, LED, LCD or electro-luminescent display. The display device 32 can be color or monochrome although, preferably, the display is color. Preferably, the qualifying condition is a predetermined combination of indicia appearing on a plurality of reels 30. As illustrated in the three reel slot game shown in Fig. 1, the qualifying condition could be the text "BONUS!" appearing in the same location on three adjacent reels.

Award Selection Embodiments

Referring now to Fig. 3, an enlarged front elevational view of the display device 32 is shown containing award selection components of the present invention. The display device includes an initial award selector 52 and a plurality of masking award selectors 54, 56 and 58. An initial award is the current award given to the player and is the award generated by the bonus round if the player decides not to exchange for one of the masked awards. The masking award selectors individually mask one or more enticement awards and one or more consolation awards. Enticement

your current credits. You can select one of your current credits or try for a higher value.”

Referring now to Fig. 4, another award selection embodiment is illustrated, wherein the game visually discloses more information than in the embodiment of Fig. 3. In this embodiment, the initial award selector 52 and the prompt 60 disclose the value of the initial award, e.g., the phrase, “You now have 250 credits.” The game can place the disclosure value anywhere, as long as a player can readily associate the disclosure to the initial award selector 52. The prompt 60 sets forth that one of the masking selectors 54, 56 and 58 contains more credits than the player’s 250 current credits. The player has no idea how many more credits are obtainable, nor the relative values of the other two selectors. The player does know the value of the “safe” play, i.e., selecting the initial award selector 52.

In the award selection embodiment of Fig. 4 and in all preceding and succeeding selection embodiments, the game can employ an initial award selector 52 having more than one initial award. For instance if there are two initial awards, the prompt 60 includes a suitable message, such as, “Two of the selections A, B, or C have more combined credits than your current 500 combined credits. You can keep both of your current credits or pick any two of A, B, or C and try for a higher value.” Here, selecting the initial award selector 52 selects both initial awards.

In any of the embodiments illustrated herein, the game can provide any number of masking selectors, such as the selectors 54, 56 and 58. A predetermined number of masking selectors associate with enticement awards, i.e., awards having values greater than the initial award. The remainder of the selectors associate with consolation awards, i.e., awards having values less than the initial award. The present invention also contemplates a consolation award having an equal value to one or more initial awards. It should be appreciated that adding more initial awards and more masking selectors complicates the player's decision.

Referring now to Fig. 6, a preferred award selection embodiment is illustrated, wherein the game visually discloses more information than in the embodiments of Figs. 3, 4 and 5. In this embodiment, the initial award

selector 52 and the prompt 60 disclose the value of the initial award, e.g., the phrase, "You now have 250 credits." The prompt 60 also discloses the value of the enticement award, i.e., the phrase, "One of the selections A, B or C contains 470 credits. You can keep the 250 or try for the 470." The
5 player here knows how many more credits are obtainable from one of the selectors but does not know the relative values of the other two selectors.

In this embodiment, the player knows the value of the "safe" play, i.e., selecting the initial value selector 52. The player can also gage the risk/reward ratio of selecting a masking selector. For instance, the player
10 can assume that the two remaining masked awards have values below 250 and determine whether it is worth risking the 250 for a one in three chance at 470 credits. A player making such an assumption still wants to know how far the remaining masked awards are below 250.

It should be appreciated that a player, over time, can gain an idea
15 of the relative values of masked awards. That is, after playing the bonus round of the present invention a plurality of times, the player can map the revealed awards (discussed below). Revealing the awards provides the persistent and astute player with an opportunity to record the enticement and consolation values. Each gaming device is driven by one more
20 algorithms that take into account such things as the range of possible payouts from a bonus round. Assuming that a gaming device does not switch algorithms, the game consistently provides the same range of

possible payouts. With an intuitive feel for the range of consolation awards, the experienced player can better gage the risk/reward ratio for selecting a masking selector.

The present invention contemplates randomly choosing the initial award, the enticement award and the consolation awards from separate databases (not shown), which is well known in the art of manufacturing gaming devices. The initial awards are therefore preferably randomly selected from a database (not illustrated) having a middle range of values. The enticement awards are preferably randomly selected from a database (not illustrated) having a higher range of values. The consolation awards are preferably randomly selected from a database (not shown) having a lower range of values. It should be appreciated that upon random selection, an initial award can be relatively desirable or undesirable and an enticement award can be relatively enticing or not enticing. If, as above, the initial award is 250 and the enticement award is 470 credits, the player may decide that 250 is enough. If the initial award is 90 and the enticement award is 405, the player may opt to play for a 315 credit increase (i.e., $405 - 90$) even though the enticement award is lower than in the previous example (i.e., 405 v. 470).

Referring now to Fig. 7, one example of yet another award selection embodiment is illustrated, wherein the game visually discloses more information than in the preferred embodiment of Fig. 6. In this

embodiment, the initial award selector 52 and the prompt 60 disclose the value of the initial award, e.g., the phrase, "You now have 250 credits." The prompt 60 also discloses the value of the enticement award, i.e., "One of the selections A, B or C has 470 credits ...". The prompt 60 further
5 discloses the consolation award values, i.e., the phrase, "one (of A, B or C) has 100 credits and the other has thirty credits." As stated above, each consolation award is preferably greater than zero, however, in a stand alone game embodiment, one or more consolation awards can be zero. This embodiment also contemplates disclosing the values of less than all
10 of the consolation awards.

The player here knows how many more credits are obtainable from one of the selectors and also knows the possible losses from the other two selectors. The player can determine that the average of the masked awards is 200 $((470 + 100 + 30)/3)$. The player can then optimally
15 determine to keep the "safe" initial award and not risk choosing one of the masking selectors, since the initial award (250) is more than the average masked award (200).

Referring now to Fig. 8, another example of the award selection embodiment of Fig. 7 is illustrated, wherein the game provides a plurality
20 of enticement and consolation awards. In this example, the initial award selector 52 and the prompt 60 disclose the value of the initial award, e.g., the phrase, "You now have 250 credits." The prompt 60 also discloses the

value of a plurality of enticement awards, i.e., the phrase, "One of the credit selections A, B, C, D or E has 550 credits, one has 470 credits ...".

The prompt 60 further discloses the consolation award values associated with the masking selectors 54, 56, 58, 62 and 64, i.e., the phrase , "one (of

5 A, B, C, D or E) has 150 credits, one has 50 credits and the other has ten credits." As stated above, each consolation award is preferably greater than zero, however, in a stand alone game embodiment, one or more consolation awards can be zero. This embodiment also contemplates disclosing the values of less than all of the enticement and consolation
10 awards.

In this example, the player again knows how many more credits are obtainable from two of the selectors and also knows the possible losses from the other two selectors. The player can determine that the average award value is 262 $((550 + 470 + 230 + 50 + 10)/5)$. The player can then
15 optimally determine not to keep the "safe" initial award and to risk choosing one of the masking selectors, since the initial award (250) is less than the average award (262).

Referring now to Fig. 9, a process flow diagram summarizes the embodiments previously disclosed. After the game or bonus round
20 begins, as indicated by the oval 100, the present invention provides one of the following disclosures: (i) a disclosure that an enticement award exists as indicated by the block 102; (ii) a disclosure of the initial award value

Referring now to Fig. 10, a chart of the reveal sequence of the present invention is displayed illustrating each of the situations, wherein the player selects the initial award, the low valued masked award, an intermediate masked award, and the high valued masked award. The chart provides three masked awards as illustrated in Fig. 6. The method

Row 68 of the chart of Fig. 10 contains chart headings. The chart heading 70 includes the player's selection. The chart heading 72 includes the award that the game first reveals based upon the chart heading entry. The chart heading 74 includes the award that the game secondly reveals based upon the chart heading entry. The chart heading 76 includes the award that the game thirdly reveals based upon the chart heading entry.

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Referring to the row 82 of Fig. 10, the player elected to forgo the initial award and try for the enticement award, as can be seen under the heading 70, and selected the intermediate consolation award. In this situation, the game first reveals the low valued consolation award, as shown under the heading 72. The game then reveals the player's selection of the intermediate consolation award, as shown under the heading 74. Finally, the game reveals the high valued enticement award, as shown under the heading 76.

15 Referring to the row 84 of Fig. 10, the player elected to forgo the
initial award and try for the enticement award, as can be seen under the
heading 70, and successfully selected the enticement award. In this
situation, the game only specifies that the high value or enticement award
be revealed last. That is, the game randomly determines whether to
20 reveal the low value or the intermediate consolation award first, as shown
under the heading 72. The game then reveals the remaining consolation
award second, as shown under the heading 74. The game can set a 50%

chance of revealing either the low or intermediate consolation award first or maintain any percentage as desired by the implementor. Finally, the game reveals the high valued enticement award, as shown under the heading 76.

5 The present invention preferably employs two rules in determining the order in which to reveal awards: (1) the game preferably never reveals the player's selection first; and (2) the game preferably always reveals the highest valued enticement award last. These rules are based upon two assumptions. The first assumption is that as awards are
10 revealed, anticipation builds up in the player, which increases excitement and enjoyment. Making the player wait to see the player's award promotes anticipation. The second assumption is that, if the player is shown and thus knows the value of the enticement award up front, when the game reveals the enticement award, the player will feel a let down.
15 That is, the player is waiting to see where the game has hidden the enticement award. Once the game reveals the enticement award, the excitement level drops. Keeping the enticement award concealed maintains the excitement level and further promotes anticipation.

Referring now to Fig. 11, a chart of the reveal sequence of the
20 present invention is illustrated, wherein the player can select from an initial award, a low valued masked award, a plurality of intermediate masked awards, and a plurality of high valued masked awards. The chart applies

to the embodiment of Fig. 8, wherein the game provides two higher value enticement awards and three lower value consolation awards. Using the rules above, the game preferably reveals as many awards as possible before revealing the selected award. The game reveals the selected award, however, before revealing a final enticement award.

Row 86 of the chart of Fig. 11 contains chart headings. The chart heading 88 includes the player's selection. The chart heading 90 includes the award that the game first reveals based upon the chart heading entry. The chart heading 92 includes the award that the game secondly reveals based upon the chart heading entry. The chart heading 96 includes the award that the game thirdly reveals based upon the chart heading entry. The chart heading 98 includes the award that the game fourthly reveals based upon the chart heading entry. The chart heading 100 includes the award that the game fifthly reveals based upon the chart heading entry.

Referring to the row 102 of Fig. 11, the player elected to play it safe and keep the initial award, as can be seen under the heading 88. In this situation, the game only specifies that the high value or enticement awards be revealed last. That is, the game randomly determines whether to reveal the low value consolation award or either of the two intermediate consolation awards first, as shown under the heading 90. The game then applies the same random determination for the second revealing upon the two remaining consolation awards, as shown under the heading 92. The

low value or the intermediate consolation awards first and second, as shown under the headings 90 and 92, respectively, and as disclosed in connection with row 102. The game thirdly reveals the unselected high value enticement award and fourthly reveals the remaining low or
5 intermediate consolation award to build suspense in the final two picks. Finally, the game reveals the selected high value enticement award, as indicated under the heading 100.


Mechanical Display

10 Referring now to Fig. 12, a front elevational view of an example of a separate electro-mechanical display mechanism 110 is illustrated, which operates in conjunction with a secondary the display device (not shown) and the display device 32 to reveal one or a plurality of selected awards. Fig. 12 illustrates gaming device 10 having an area above the display
15 device 32, on the front side of the gaming device 10, on which to position the display mechanism 110. Display mechanism 110 is preferably juxtaposed next to the display device 32, as shown, such that a directional indicator, such as the arrow displayed as the indicia of selector 56 can readily direct the player to the display mechanism. That said, the present
20 invention contemplates positioning the display mechanism 110 to the left of, to the right of and underneath as well as above the display device 32.

10 A first motor (not shown) preferably mounts to the gaming device
10, and has suitable linkages (not shown), which ultimately mount to the
left door (not shown), such that when said first motor rotates in one
direction, the left door 112 opens or moves to the left and when said motor
rotates in an opposite direction, the left door 112 closes or moves to the
15 right. A second motor (not shown) preferably mounts to the gaming
device 10, and has suitable linkages (not shown), which ultimately mount
to the right door (not shown), such that when said second motor rotates in
one direction, the right door 114 opens or moves to the right and when
said motor rotates in an opposite direction, the right door 114 closes or
20 moves to the left.

A first pair of suitable switches, such as optical switches (not shown) are mounted to the gaming device 10 on preferably both sides of

Referring now to Fig. 14, a preferred secondary display device embodiment 116 is illustrated, wherein the secondary display 116 includes two rollers 118 and 120. One roller 118 is a drive roller and is suitably attached to a motor 121 and a bearing 122, which are fixed to the gaming device 10. The motor 121 can thus rotate the roller 118 clockwise or counterclockwise as determined by the controller of gaming device 10. The motor 121 can be a stepper motor having a drive (not shown) and programmable indexer (not shown), which are well known in the art and

 The belt 124 preferably displays a plurality of awards, such as the award #3, award #4 and award #5 illustrated by Fig. 14. The belt 124 can display any award indicia designed by the implementor including numerical award values, an image in conjunction with a value and a character in conjunction with a value. In certain embodiments, the display can include one or more images and/or characters. The motor 1210, preferably a stepper motor as described above, is programmable and can rotate the belt in two directions, using variable velocities and accelerations and stop the belt at any time to display any award desired by the implementor.

In another embodiment (not illustrated), the secondary display device 116 is a separate paystop display containing one or more mechanical reels, wherein each reel includes a plurality of award values. It should be appreciated that the implementor can create other different

mechanical award generating mechanisms, such as a spinning wheel, and the present invention is not limited to the embodiments herein disclosed.

In any secondary display embodiment, the secondary display 116 is capable of displaying a randomly generated value such as the 450 credits shown on the secondary display 116 of Fig. 13. The game can generate the value before opening the doors 112 and 114 or after, as desired by the implementor. The game preferably associates the display mechanism 110, as illustrated, with one selector 56 and accordingly with the award associated with selector 56.

Referring now to Fig. 15, the present invention contemplates an alternative embodiment, wherein the display mechanism 110 reveals the awards for a plurality of or for all three selectors 54, 56 and 58. In this embodiment, a plurality and preferably all of the selectors, merely enable the player to input a selection but do not otherwise reveal or unmask an award. When a player picks one of the selectors, the game preferably carries out the appropriate reveal sequence, described above, upon the secondary display 116 of the display mechanism 110.

For example, referring to the reveal sequence illustrated with the row 80 of Fig. 9, if the player elects to forgo the initial award, tries for the enticement award and selects the low valued consolation award: (i) the doors 112 and 114 open, the game first reveals the intermediate consolation award and the doors close; (ii) the doors 112 and 114 open,

conclude?
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the game secondly reveals the player's selection of the low valued consolation award and the doors close; and (iii) the doors 112 and 114 open, the game reveals the high valued enticement award and the doors close. In another example, the doors 112 and 114 open once, the game
5 displays the entire reveal sequence and the doors close. The present invention contemplates any combination of these two examples revealing any reveal sequence designed by the implementor. If the player elects to play it safe and select the initial award, the game can: (i) reveal all values with the doors opening and closing one time; (ii) reveal individual values
10 with the doors opening and closing a plurality of times; or (iii) provide any suitable reveal means on the display device 32 such as enabling selectors 54, 56 and 58 to once again reveal or unmask the awards.

While the present invention is described in connection with what is presently considered to be the most practical and preferred embodiments,
15 it should be appreciated that the invention is not limited to the disclosed embodiments, and is intended to cover various modifications and equivalent arrangements included within the spirit and scope of the claims. Modifications and variations in the present invention may be made without departing from the novel aspects of the invention as defined in the claims,
20 and this application is limited only by the scope of the claims.